



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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Maryland Pimp Pleads Guilty to Trafficking Four Juveniles, Including a 12-Year-Old, Into the District of Columbia for Prostitution

Washington, D.C. - Shelby S. Lewis, 42, of Temple Hills, Maryland, has pled guilty to four-counts of Interstate Transportation of Minors for Purposes of Prostitution, announced U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips, Acting Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office John Perren, and MPD Chief Cathy L. Lanier. Lewis entered his guilty on New Year's Eve, December 31, 2009, before U.S. Magistrate Judge Deborah A. Robinson. Sentencing will be scheduled for early 2010 before Judge Emmet G. Sullivan. According to the plea agreement, Lewis faces 15 to 20 years of incarceration.

During the plea hearing, Lewis admitted prostituting a 12-year-old girl for approximately two years after he became her official guardian. In addition, Lewis admitted prostituting a 13-year-old girl for approximately three years, a 16-year-old girl for three weeks, and a 14-year-old girl for three days. Lewis met the girls on the streets of D.C. and Maryland and had them work on both sides of the Maryland/D.C. line and in downtown Washington, D.C.

The charges stemmed from information obtained during an undercover operation conducted by the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department's Prostitution Enforcement Unit in late May 2009, that ultimately showed that Lewis was bringing juveniles into the District of Columbia for the purposes of prostitution between 2006 and 2009. During the MPD operation, the MPD arrested the 14- and 16-year-old girls for prostitution near 14th and K Streets, N.W. The 13-year-old girl was recovered separately after she had been reported missing to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. All of the juveniles lived with Lewis and his minor biological children in his Temple Hills home.

After the girls were identified, the MPD and the FBI executed a search warrant at Lewis's home. This led to the seizure of numerous items consistent with Mr. Lewis's prostitution business, including a firearm and numerous photographs and computer images of the victims and known prostitutes. In addition, during the execution of the search warrant, two adult prostitutes were found living in Mr. Lewis's home.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Phillips, Acting FBI Assistant Director Perren, and MPD Chief Lanier praised the efforts of Youth Investigation Detective Jonathan Andrews, and the Metropolitan Police Department's Prostitution Enforcement Unit, in particular Detectives Steven Schwalm and Mark Gilkey, as well as the Federal Bureau of Investigation Washington Field Office. They also commended D.C. Assistant Attorney General Anthony DeLeon, the Maryland and D.C. Human Trafficking Task Forces, and the Polaris Project. They also praised the work of USAO Victim Witness Advocate Veronica Vaughan for her work with all of the prostituted children. Lastly, they praised the administrative support provided by Paralegal Teesha Tobias and Legal Assistant Jacqueline Akyea, and the work of Assistant U.S. Attorneys Roy L. Austin, Jr. and Bridgette Crafton Tillman, who are prosecuting the case.

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